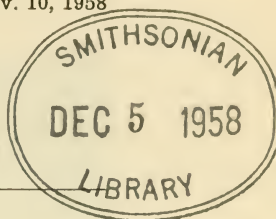


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A NEW COLEONYX FROM TEXAS

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During the course of an ecological survey of the Big Bend Region of Texas, supported by the Texas Game and Fish Commission under contract with the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, a single specimen of a large ground gecko was captured June 20, 1956, in a snap trap set for rodents. Site of capture was in a broken lava flow about half way up the ridge directly north of the headquarters of the Black Gap Wildlife Management Area about 50 miles south-southeast of Marathon. The general area is typical of the Chihuahuan Desert with such plants as chino grass, cactus, legchugilla, sotol, leucophyllum and other desert shrubs dominating the landscape.

This large gecko is most closely allied to the forest-dwelling geckos of the *Coleonyx elegans*-*C. mitratus* group of southern Mexico and Central America and its occurrence in the desert habitat of the Big Bend was most unexpected. We have thought of the possibility that the specimen may have been transported to the Black Gap by man, but this seems unlikely because of the remoteness of the area from the usual travelways of man. Special efforts have been made to find additional specimens since 1956 but we have turned up only *Coleonyx brevis* which is common in the area.

The closest known occurrence of the related *Coleonyx elegans* is in Colima on the west coast of Mexico and in Veracruz on the east coast (see Klauber, 1945, Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist., 10(11):133-216). Both of these areas are several hundred miles from the Big Bend section of Texas.

The most conspicuous characters of the Texas specimen are (1) its large size, (2) the enlarged tubercles on the dorsum and (3) the reticulated dorsal pattern. The first two place it in the *elegans-mitratus* group, but since it lacks the bold dorsal bands and differs in several other respects we believe it represents a new species. Dr. Hobart M. Smith, who has examined the specimen and compared it with other species of *Coleonyx*, supports our view. For this new species we propose the name

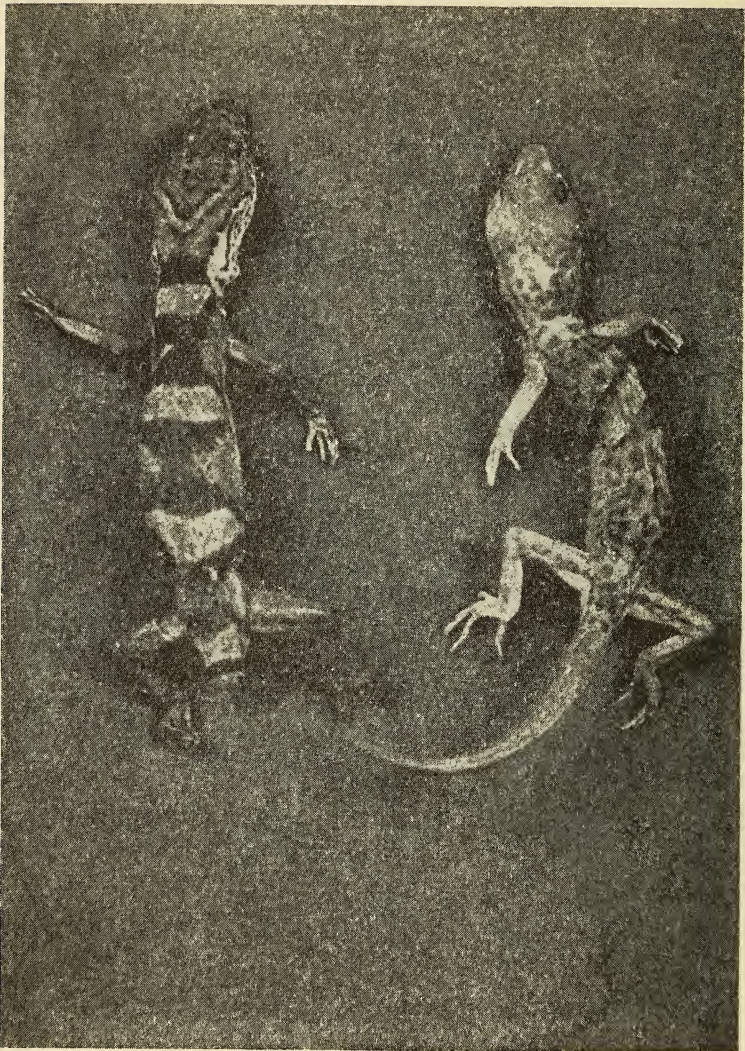


Fig. 1. Specimen on the right is the holotype of *Coleonyx reticulatus*; the one on the left is *Coleonyx elegans*. Note differences in color pattern, shape of head, and distinctness of dorsal tubercles. Diagonal black mark on animal at right is a wound caused by the snap trap in which it was caught.

Coleonyx reticulatus sp. nov.

Holotype: Adult female, No. 12855, Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection, from Black Gap, 50 miles south-southeast of Marathon, 2500 ft. elevation, Brewster County, Texas; collected by Charles K. Winkler, June 20, 1956; original No. 6.

Diagnosis: A large *Coleonyx* with 13 irregular rows of tubercles on dorsum; 24 and 31 lamellae on fourth finger and fourth toe, respectively; tips of claws exposed by the sheath-scales; dorsum with profusion of small dark spots and reticulations; snout-vent length about 80 mm.

Description of Holotype: Adult female; snout-vent length, 82 mm.; length of tail (partly regenerated), 58 mm.; length of head, 20 mm.; width of head, 15 mm.; snout to eye, 7 mm.; snout to ear, 17 mm.; width of eye, 6 mm.; internarial width, 3 mm.; length of leg, 35 mm.; length of arm, 26 mm.; dorsal part of head covered with non-imbriate, circular granules; rostral wider than high, apex rounded and extending posteriorly to anterior edge of nostril; prenasals, 1-1; internasals, 1-1; postnasals, 2-2; subnasals, 2-2; supranasals, 1-1; supralabials 9-9; first supralabial twice the size of others in series; infralabials 12-12, last three very small, hidden by fold of skin when mouth is closed; nostrils large, subcircular; two rows of scales bordering eye lids, outer row flesh color, inner row black; ear large, 4 times longer vertically than wide; mental somewhat oval and irregularly rounded posteriorly, bordered posteriorly by 9 chin scales; mental and first infralabial on each side contacted by 13 granules.

Dorsum covered by granules similar in size to those on head, interspersed with 13 irregular rows of enlarged tubercles that become larger posteriorly; about 26 tubercles between limb insertions along mid-dorsal line; enlarged dorsal tubercles keeled or peaked, somewhat flattened laterally; ventral scales imbricate, 3 to 4 times larger than dorsal granules, about 31 scales across venter; approximately 90 scales from anterior arm insertion to enlarged preanal scales; preanal pores not in evidence but indicated by slight depressions in center of each enlarged preanal scale, the latter total 17.

Arms and legs without enlarged tubercles, size of granules equal to those on dorsum; 4th finger and 4th toe longest; lamellae on 4th finger and 4th toe 24 and 31, respectively; tail regenerated, without enlarged tubercles, but covered by rows of imbricate scales, largest ventrally; two postanal scales present; cloacal bones not evident externally.

Head light brown above, spotted profusely with brown; no evidence of light nuchal loop; inner surface of eyelid black, outer edge flesh colored; chin, flesh colored; throat, yellowish-white; labials densely spotted with brown; dorsum and tail light brown with large brown spots and reticulations; venter flesh color.

Comparisons: Most closely allied to *C. elegans* (Gray) and *Coleonyx mitratus* (Peters) in having large tubercles intermixed with the granular scales on the dorsum. In *C. variegatus* (Baird), *C. fasciatus* (Boulenger) and *C. brevis* Stejneger the dorsal scales are uniformly granular. Similar to *elegans* in having scales of the claw sheath long with only the tips of the claws exposed. It differs from *elegans*, however, in having (1) a reticulated dorsal pattern (rather than bold bands), (2) dorsal tubercles in about 13 irregular rows (rather than 19 to 21), (3) tu-

bercles about half as large in basal area, (4) 24 and 31 lamellae on fourth finger and fourth toe, respectively, rather than 17 and 20 or less, etc.

Differs from *mitratus* in (1) sheath of claw long so that only the tip of the claw is exposed; (2) dorsum reticulated rather than with cross bars; (3) dorsal tubercles in 13 rows rather than 21 to 23, etc.